

What additional personal information do you wish to share with the Truman Scholarship Foundation?

I became smitten with public service when my mother ran for District Judge of Beauregard Parish (pop. 35,000) during my senior year of high school. I helped her in many aspects of the campaign: coordinating sign distribution, phone banks, and accompanying her as she canvassed the parish going door-to-door. This type of campaigning, sometimes termed “retail politics,” was a major factor in my mother winning the election.

I caught election fever after experiencing the campaigning process, talking to individuals in the community, and encouraging them to vote and I began to explore the possibility of making politics my career path. I was fascinated by the behind-the-scenes work that went into executing a successful campaign: I worked with my mother’s campaign consultant on a variety of strategic considerations, such as when and where to post billboards or air commercials. The opportunity to learn first-hand in a campaign was incredibly valuable, yet nerve-racking: my mother won by a mere 72 votes.

My mother’s campaign impressed upon me the urgency of encouraging everyone to exercise their right to vote. Her win was a perfect example of demonstrating that every vote counts. As a campaign volunteer, I quickly discovered that not everyone recognizes the importance, or value, of voting, much less of getting involved in the political process. Even though I was ecstatic by the outcome of the election, I was discouraged by the lack of civic engagement exhibited by our community while out campaigning. I want to work in political campaigns, and I believe a campaign is an effective platform for advocating that a stronger electorate provides for better governance.